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22 October 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Science and Technology
SUBJECT : Forecasting Capability as Reflected in NIE's
REFERENCE : [] memorandum for the record of
7 October, same subject

1. We have reviewed the referenced memorandum with much interest. Its conclusion -- that the forecasts of strategic strike forces have been "amazingly accurate" from an overall point of view -- is of course highly gratifying. We fear, however, that it may overstate the case.

2. Judging the validity of these kinds of estimates is of course extremely complicated. We have a number of ideas about the choice of weapon systems considered, the proper bases of comparison, the handling of ranges in the estimates, the weighting of weapon systems, and the appropriate time periods for comparison. We can also supply additional NIE's and Memoranda to Holders of NIE's which, if included in the comparison, may alter the deviations obtained.

3. We would be happy to discuss all these matters with

[] In its present form, however, we think that the

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memorandum is vulnerable to a number of criticisms and should not be distributed outside the Agency.

ABBOT SMITH
Acting Director
National Estimates

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